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MIGRATORY STEPS

Ukrainians in a Rural Danish Region

Niels Jul Nielsen

Introduction

The past three decades have been marked by a rise in mobility and transnational living that is evidence of a departure from the previous more than half a century, from the First World War to the end of the Cold War.[1] Put it in overall terms the breakdown of the Soviet empire opened up the international economy, the former planned economies were integrated in the world market, and a neoliberal paradigm came to rule the political economy on an almost worldwide scale.[2]

Alongside the increase in capital flows, also borders that limited the movement of individuals have been loosened. And in the EU the launching of the single European market in 1993 established the principle of freedom of movement of not only capital, goods and services, but also labour. As a consequence, people can move around with almost no restrictions within the borders of the union. In the former Eastern bloc countries, the trammels of moving abroad have been removed.

In the wake of these transformations, there has been an explosion in academic literature on migration. How do people utilize the new opportunities? How are they impacted by them? How do they change family patterns and interpersonal relations? How does the flow of people transform both the sending countries and the new host countries? How do people travel; are they circular migrants, temporary migrants, or permanent migrants moving continuously to new destinations? Do they make up

1 Cf. Elliott, Anthony/Urry, John: Mobile lives, London/New York 2010; Glick Schiller, Nina/Basch, Linda/Szanton Blanc, Cristina (Ed.): Towards a transnational perspective on migration: race, class, ethnicity, and nationalism reconsidered, New York 1992.

2 Cf. Baglioni, Guido/Crouch, Colin: European industrial relations: the challenge of flexibility, London 1990; Crouch, Colin: The Strange Non-death of Neo-liberalism, Oxford 2013; Crouch, Colin/Streeck, Wolfgang: The diversity of democracy: corporatism, social order and political conflict (MA: Edward Elgar), Cheltenham/Northampton 2006; Leitner, Helga/Peck, Jamie/Sheppard, Eric S.: Contesting neoliberalism: urban frontiers, New York 2007.

mobile, transnational families or send out one family member to build a new home base?

Inquiries into these patterns are varied. Quantitative studies include large-scale calculations of numbers, types, and time schedules of the migrants. In the field of political science, research focuses on regulatory frameworks and systems of rights. In the ethnological and anthropological realm, the primary focus is on the experiences of the migrants and the ways in which they organize their lives as individuals and families under the changing circumstances.

The present article is embedded in the latter disciplines, using a case from current research to understand what motivates migrants and how they respond to the conditions they encounter. Moreover, it examines how migrants' different understandings of 'the good life' lead them to choose diverse paths although faced with similar circumstances.[3] The approach to answer these questions revolves to a large extent around issues related to the labour market. Although not the predominant scholarly entrance to migrant lives, I have found that work strategies and choices are key to understanding migrant lives.[4] In the majority of cases, the reason for moving is an urge to work under different conditions in new settings; whether the choice to migrate is caused by poor conditions at home and a necessity to look for livelihood opportunities in new surroundings or by a desire to have interesting new experiences and build up international competencies and networks.

This article concentrates on the former kind of migration, i.e. migrants in low or semi-skilled professions. These migrants predominantly move because of bare necessity to the marginal and often precarious parts of the labour markets, in contrast to highly-skilled professionals who jump from position to position as part of their career path. The article portrays two migrant families (currently living in the Danish region where the research has taken place); it lays out the paths their parents have taken in the homeland and the trajectory they have been on themselves from leaving their home

3 The research project Neoculturation of life-modes during the current transformation of state system and world economy – the challenges, variations and changes in cultural lifemodes, funded by the Danish Velux foundation, is outlined in extension at www.lifemodes.ku.dk. Issues related to migration are not at the centre of the research project; but migration, as a significant condition of the present world order, is included when relevant, such as in relation to labour market transformations.

4 Cf. Jul Nielsen, Niels: Ordinary Workers and Industrial Relations in a New World Order, in: Sociology Study 4/8 (2014), pp. 728–737; Jul Nielsen, Niels: Polishness as entrance ticket and barrier to an altered labour market in the Danish construction industry, in: Work Organisation, Labour and Globalisation 9/1 (2015), pp. 63–75; Jul Nielsen, Niels/Sandberg, Marie: Between social dumping and social protection. The challenge and re-negotiation of creating 'orderly working conditions' among Polish circular migrants in the Copenhagen area, Denmark, in: Ethnologia Europaea 44/1 (2014), pp. 23–37.

country and striving to get a foothold in the Danish labour market. Both families ultimately aim to become Danish citizens, and establish a permanent home in the country. The focus is on the different steps between national and labour market systems that their parents first took, and that they themselves have later followed in their endeavour to 'become Danes'.

First step: entering a liberal era in Ukraine

The two young couples, Ilya and Irina and Sergei and Sveta, are from Ukraine, and immigrated while they were still in their teens; they have been in Denmark for five to ten years.[5] They embody the transformations that are described above, taking advantage of the opportunities that have emerged during the last decades to move across national borders in the internationalised economy. They have correspondingly encountered the downside of the neoliberal political economy, where security systems and worker welfare are generally dispensed in favour of market logic, also when this logic applies to competition among wage-earners.

Ilya, Irina, Sergei and Sveta are not the first in their families to make a journey related to the change in the world order around 1990. Since they are all currently in their late 20s, they were hardly born when their parents experienced the collapse of the Soviet empire. This change introduced political independence together with liberal economic reforms and privatisation. As a result, their parents underwent a transition from being citizens under Soviet rule, and employees in state-owned enterprises, to being citizens in a democratic system, not only free to elect their own rulers but also to act freely on the market and urged to provide for themselves on market terms.

Some of them found new occupations in private companies, while others remained employed in companies that were still partly run by the state. Several of them occasionally tried their luck as self-employed workers, i.e. as service providers of different kinds. The Ukrainian economy went through a grave downturn during the 1990s, and in many cases the household economy had to be complemented with different

5 In the Danish region that is the focus of this research, Ukrainians made up the first wave of foreign workers following the breakdown of the Soviet empire. Already during the 1990s they came in larger groups, partly due to measures taken by local farmers in order to attract them. Upon the EU enlargement in 2004, which included eight former Eastern bloc countries (Ukraine not included) as member states, Poles in particular became a sizeable group in the area. After the subsequent EU enlargement in 2007 (with the inclusion of Rumania and Bulgaria), Rumanians have found jobs in the region. Today Poles, Ukrainians, and Rumanian (in that order) make up the three largest migrant groups.

forms of small trading, running of a small shop, sewing for people, or the like. Altogether, their lives were fundamentally changed by the liberalisation and the spread of market economy, but the transition took place within the national borders of Ukraine.

Their children have taken a next step by seeking their fortune abroad. That does not mean, though, that the older generation has become entirely decoupled from its children. The parents are in frequent virtual contact with their children (typically using Skype); and when possible they travel to them in order to give them a helping hand in their new surroundings. Most significantly, the birth of grandchildren necessitated their presence to make ends meet in periods of peak load among the young couples.

In a less direct though important way, the parents of the young couples now living abroad are present in their children's lives through their example. During their childhood and adolescence, the children witnessed their parents' strategies to cope with the new circumstances in Ukraine, including their parents' choices of occupation, their experiences as 'free workers' in the labour market, and their experiences, if any, with self-employment. To some degree, these experiences have been internalised as part of their own approach to life: what is preferable work, appropriate working conduct, and possible routes to follow in the labour market? The now adult children with this background have formed particular practices and ways to comprehend life circumstances that they encounter.

Such understandings are another important key to understanding migrants' everyday practises in the labour market. Thus, in the following portrait of the Ukrainian families the insight into their practices and strategies will be analysed through two lenses: on the one hand, the opportunities and challenges that can be found in the labour market; and on the other hand their preferences and understandings of 'the good working life'. As will be outlined, the two Ukrainian couples have taken almost parallel paths after entering Denmark. However, upon closer look it is revealed how they encounter and interpret the similar circumstances in dissimilar ways, because they differ in their understanding of the preferred type of working life. In this particular case, the couples strive for respectively ordinary-waged work and self-employment. The article is therefore reluctant to regard migrant livelihood patterns – such as an inclination for ordinary work or self-employment – as either related to particular circumstances or connected to specific migrant communities.[6] The insight into proba-

6 Cf. Baycan Levent, Tuzin/Masurel, Enno/Nijkamp, Peter: Diversity in entrepreneurship: ethnic and female roles in urban economic life, in: International Journal of Social Economics 30/11 (2003); Clark, Ken/Drinkwater, Stephen: Ethnicity and Self-Employment in Britain, in: Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics 60/3 (1998), pp. 383–407; Kloosterman, Robert/Rath, Jan: Immigrant entrepreneurs in advanced economies.

ble differences within worldviews and dreams, and thus also practises and strategies, is important in order to succeed in unravelling the complexity in migrant cultures, including the question of why they end up in different parts of the labour market.

Second step: reaching Denmark – the common picture

From the first fieldwork encounter with Ukrainians working in the region of research, they appear to make up a homogenous group. The region consists of a few larger towns and an extended countryside, and here Ukrainians are almost entirely occupied in agriculture. Ukraine is not a EU member country, and the preferred possible route for joining the Danish labour market is through trainee contracts in agriculture. The Danish state buttresses this opportunity due to difficulty of attracting national workers to the mainly unskilled undertakings, such as manual work in pig stables, at mink farms, at farms with dairy cattle, etc. The identification card that a Ukrainian migrant worker receives following the admission as a trainee contains not only personal data but also the name of the particular farmer employer that the person is connected to. Ukrainian migrant workers are allowed to find new employers but only within the field of agriculture, at which time a new ID card with updated information should be provided. In case of a migrant couple, the partner, typically the wife, is allowed to take any job (as a means to make the family self-sufficient), with an ID designation of 'Family member'.

Most commonly, the Ukrainian migrants are couples. The ones that do not have a partner when they enter Denmark are generally searching for one. Moreover, Ukrainians maintain a relatively close network of relationships. This is not only the case in physical encounters but also through the use of virtual networks. One common network is *odnoklassniki (ok.ru)*, a Facebook-like internet site in Russian that connects them with other Ukrainians in the region (as well as outside and abroad). Through this site, members exchange furniture, cars, household items, and other goods; they also arrange carpooling locally or to the homeland. It is also here that new partners can be

Mixed embeddedness further explored, in: Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 27/2 (2001), pp. 189–201; Lever, John/Milbourne, Paul: Migrant workers and migrant entrepreneurs: changing established/outsider relations across society and space?, in: Space and Polity 18/3 (2014), pp. 255–268; Rusinovic, Katja: Moving between markets? Immigrant entrepreneurs in different markets, in: International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research 14/6 (2008), pp. 440–454; Sahin, Mediha/Nijkamp, Peter/Rietdijk, Marius: Cultural diversity and urban innovativeness: personal and business characteristics of urban migrant entrepreneurs, in: Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research 22/3 (2009), pp. 251–281; Sahin, Mediha/Nijkamp, Peter/Suzuki, Soushi: Contrasts and similarities in economic performance of migrant entrepreneurs, in: IZA Journal of Migration 3/1 (2014), p. 7.

found. In the region that was the focus of this research, many Ukrainians are active in the broad range of activities that take place in local associations, such as sports clubs. Typically, they gather with others of their own nationality.

All in all, Ukrainians that are newcomers to Denmark appear rather uniform, taking part in unskilled manual work in agriculture and a well-developed social life. It can be added that in general Ukrainians as well as other 'Eastern workers' (the tag attributed in the public discourse to workers from the former Eastern bloc) are successfully integrated in the region. The supply of abandoned homesteads that are cheap in the countryside, the supply of work not favoured by Danes, and a local request for new inhabitants to balance the flow of people to the larger cities favours this pattern of migration in the region. Unlike Eastern workers from EU member countries, who are allowed to stay in Denmark, the Ukrainians must work uninterruptedly for five years in order to apply for a permanent residency permit. This also contributes to a pattern of maintaining a stable relationship to a particular region rather than moving on.

Third step: becoming Danish – different stages on the same path …?

The two couples here fit well into the overall pattern, but indeed, when turning to individuals, the picture always smudges. Every person is unique and has an entirely individual story, where experiences and worldviews, just like future dreams, will never be merely a replica of another individual. What we seek in cultural inquiries, however, are not individual nuances but fundamental distinctions; i.e. where (relatively) similar circumstances are met with distinctly different strategies. In that case, it could be argued then, that similar circumstances become means in praxes of different kinds, since the individuals in question are actually entering (or continuing) different courses of life, although faced with similar opportunities. There are indications that these two families exemplify different life-courses; and thus their example can illuminate important features of divergent preferences, priorities and passions (in short, different ideas of what is the good life) within a migrant population that otherwise tends to fuse together as an entity associated merely with a common national background (or understood as differing only with regards to supposedly generalised sociological 'factors' such as gender, age, educational level, social background, etc.). By concentrating mainly on the males in the two families, this idea will be analysed in more depth below.

A particular challenge when following migrants is their ever-changing life circumstances, which tend to repeatedly change their strategies and plans. This makes it hard

as a researcher to capture the principal concerns and preferences of the people in question. Therefore, there is a risk that their choices and life-courses are understood as merely reflections of these altering circumstances (maybe combined with 'explanations' that bring in the aforementioned supposedly independent 'factors'). In that case, their active engagement with the course they are on is overlooked. In methodological terms, it thus might be appropriate to first lay out the circumstances as they can be grasped in the investigation; and, secondly, scrutinize how they are met and approached amongst the people in question.

Turning to Ilya and Irina, Sergei and Sveta, our immediate impression is that the two couples today stand in very dissimilar situations, although they have been on the same 'Ukrainian path'. This is connected to the fact that Ilya and Irina, who have been in Denmark for eight years, have managed to achieve a permanent residency permit. The tremendous impact this has had on their situation in contrast to the situation of Sergei and Sveta can hardly be overestimated.

Sergei and Sveta are still trying to become permanent residents; and in the period of the research project their situation has become notably uncertain and precarious. During the second interview (upon the passing of a year), the insecurity and unpredictability that often accompanies migrant life was striking: Danish authorities had recently extended the waiting period (requiring steady work to apply for permanent residency) from five to six years as an effect of the European refugee crisis. This caused grave frustrations in the family and jeopardized their entire plan. Unsurprisingly, they started to doubt if this new period would remain the same or whether new extensions – or, much worse, a blunt removal of the possibility of a permanent residency permit – could be expected.

Ilya and Irina are thus at another stage of the trajectory towards being integrated in the Danish society, one that both couples imagine as the ideal. Upon receiving their permanent residency permit, they have been able to direct all their efforts towards realizing their dreams. They have bought a single-family house located in a development in a small town in the region. The house has had only one previous owner and appears brand new. It contains a garage for Ilya and Irina's two cars, it spreads out over more than 250 m^2, and it is situated in the middle of a large lawn so neatly kept that one would think they employed a gardener. However, that is not the case; of course Ilya and Irina save the money and mend the garden themselves. They economize on what they regard as unnecessary consumption; this includes spending money on things you can do for yourself. Their investment in a large house stands outside of that sphere.

There is a clear reason for this large investment: they see the house as a means to

their integration. Their residence enables them to become citizens on equal terms with Danes, and it makes up the future foundation for bringing up their children. Their first child, a one year old girl, attends the local daycare; and Irina joins the frequent gatherings of mothers of small children in the area (in the so-called 'mothers groups' organised by the municipality). They have also become members of the association of citizens of the town, where local activities are planned and organised. Irina still works with dairy cattle at the farm that has been key for obtaining her residency permit, while Ilya, since completing the required five-year period in agriculture, has started an apprenticeship as a metalworker. Upon Ilya's completion, hopefully leading to a full-time job, Irina's plan is to pursue an education as an environmental assistant (connected to agriculture), adding to the education she already had from Ukraine.

... or different preferences?

Thus, compared to Ilya and Irina, Sergei and Sveta are not well-off, uncertain of what the future will bring. As discussed previously, this could lead one to ascribe the dissimilarities in the life that they currently lead to these different circumstances. However, should Ilya and Sveta succeed in their efforts to become permanent residents in Denmark, it is probable that they will take another course in the labour market. This possibility is not apparent from their current undertakings; Ilya works in the pig stables for the farmer that he was connected to with a trainee contract when arriving to Denmark, while Sveta has different unskilled jobs, mainly in cleaning and as a papergirl. However, talking with Sergei reveals another conceptual world and definitions of the good working life than those that Ilya conveyed.

Sergei exposes a strong inclination for becoming self-employed. Like many other Ukrainians working in farms, he is not particularly fond of the stable work; but unlike Ilya, for example, his dreams are not targeted at a traditional wage-earner job, even though this would probably provide more attractive conditions and more interesting undertakings than farm work. Sergei wants to be his own boss. To discuss in more depth the distinction between the way Sergei and Ilya approach their otherwise comparable circumstances, I employ the theoretical framework of lifemode analysis.[7]

7 Cf. Højrup, Thomas: Staat, Kultur, Gesellschaft: über die Entwicklung der Lebensformanalyse, Marburg 1995; Højrup, Thomas: State, culture, and life-modes: the foundations of life-mode analysis, Aldershot/Burlington 2003; Jespersen, A./Riegels, Melchior/Sandberg, Marie (Eds.): Verden over - en introduktion til stats- og livsformsteorien, Copenhagen 2006; Jul Nielsen, Niels: Virksomhed og arbejderliv. Bånd, brudflader og bevids-

An important lesson from lifemode theory is that you cannot determine an individual's lifemode preference from his or her occupation or position in the labour market. Again, we are not products of our circumstances; similar conditions can be met in different ways by the individual. The distinct conceptual worlds connected to the lifemode concepts might be a key to understand these differences.

When interviewing Ilya, it appears that for him the favourable path away from his somewhat subordinate and constrained position as a trainee and later employee in agriculture is to get a job completely on the same terms as Danes enjoy, with relatively good wage and working conditions in Denmark. Following his first trajectory of leaving Ukraine, his next step, upon becoming a resident, is to push for an ordinary wage-earner job. Thus, the tendency to generalise a trajectory from waged work

thed på B&W 1850–1920 [Enterprise and Workers' Life: Bonds, Ruptures and Consciousness on B&W 1850–1920], Copenhagen 2002; Jul Nielsen, Niels: Mellem storpolitik og værkstedsgulv: den danske arbejder: før, under og efter den kolde krig [Between High Politics and the Workshop Floor. The Danish Worker - Before, During and After the cold War], Copenhagen 2004; Schriewer, Klaus: Die strukturelle Lebensformanalyse: ein Beitrag zur volkskundlichen Theoriediskussion, Marburg 1993. Here is not the place for a general outline of the principles of lifemode and state-form analysis, but the basic idea is to build up a structure of concepts, mutually interdependent and making up an inner 'necessity' (rather than claiming that they are made up from empirical generalisations). The purpose of the concept building is on the one hand to put them at risk when employed in analyses of empirical accounts (and eventually reconstruct them); and on the other hand to be able to scrutinize the ethnographic data (whether contemporary or historical) for connections and interdependencies that otherwise are not necessarily illuminated. Embedded in a Marxist (and Hegelian) tradition, the concept structure consists on the (concepts of) modes of production; but instead of the Marxist class concepts, concepts of 'lifemodes' (different forms of praxis made up by specific compositions of means and ends) are constructed in connection to the modes of production (that in their turn make up the necessary conditions for the lifemodes). In contemporary Western societies, two modes of production are depicted: the capitalist mode of production and simple commodity mode of production. The capitalist mode of production requires three lifemodes: the lifemode of the wage-earner (that contributes with predefined work and in return receives a wage at a tariff-based level); the lifemode of the investor that provide the finances to run the entire business (and in return receives a profit); and a career-professional lifemode that provides the business with the necessary innovative edge in order for it to be competitive (and in return receives an individualised salary, not comparable with ordinary wages). The (concept of) Simple commodity mode of production only 'requires' one lifemode, the lifemode of the self-employed, which provides the business with all the necessary components: means of production, production material, and labour. The lifemode masters the entire production process itself. In real life, companies might be made up by characteristics of both lifemodes (such as the family farm that occasionally hires ordinary wage workers). Notably, individuals 'are' not lifemodes; but their passions, preferences, strategies – in short, their praxes and ideological universe, and thus their idea of 'the good life' – can be analysed with the lifemode concepts. Usually characteristics from different (concepts of) lifemodes can be depicted, thus creating inconsistencies in the praxis (since the lifemode concepts are mutually distinct). By inquiring people over a period of time, it often is revealed which lifemode features are most strongly founded in the individual. The concept of neoculturation emphasizes the relation that lifemodes constantly have to deal with vis-à-vis and the changes in the external milieu that constitute their necessary conditions of existence. See also reference in note 1.

(regarded as subordinate) to self-employment (regarded as more independent)[8] does not appear to provide an accurate insight into distinct migrant practices. Someone like Ilya thrives with firm, stable conditions and the sharp division between work and leisure life. Such a job fits well into his idea of freedom and independence, as well as into the family life that he and Irina have begun with the purchase of their large house. He believes that the skills he now learns as a metalworker apprentice will give him sufficient flexibility to get jobs on the current fluctuating labour market.

Sergei's preferences go in another direction altogether. As mentioned, his path away from farm work is to become his own boss. The freedom that Ilya finds in wage work on good conditions, leaving work duties behind when he is not working to focus on leisure and family time, bears no meaning for Sergei. Freedom for him is not to be in a subordinate position, no matter the conditions. He sees himself as the owner of a one-man trading company where he can build up a network of customers, and in this way utilize his desire for activity, organisation and entrepreneurship. Such a path epitomizes *his* dream of acquiring freedom and independence, which Ilya found as a worker.

The supposed freedom of the self-employed can be misinterpreted when approached from other lifemodes. For instance, when self-employed are perceived by people with a wage-earner conceptual world, the latter *either* tend to only see the lack of superiors (that they know from their own waged work) and not the huge responsibility for succeeding with a durable business that goes along with being one's own boss, including the reliance entirely upon one's own competences; *or* focus on the work and wonder how it can be meaningful to never really have time off. Thus, it is pivotal to understand what interviewees really mean and refer to when they point out attractive livelihoods. Here, it is generally relevant to bring in the concrete practical life experiences of the interviewees and also their possible acquaintance with particular conceptual worlds and practices.

In Sergei's case it appears that he has a realistic understanding of what self-employment entails. As a young man, Sergei's father worked in the state-run coalmines in Ukraine. With the independence and liberalisation of the economy, he started up a small cargo-trading company; Sergei himself wants to start up a similar type of company. As a young man he helped in the business, both in administration, with practical tasks and as a driver. He thus most likely understands what it takes to be self-employed. He acknowledges the challenge it poses to manage a business without the secu-

8 Cf. Fee, Lian Kwen/Rahman, Md Mizanur: From Workers to Entrepreneurs. Development of Bangladeshi Migrant Businesses in The Republic of Korea, in: IMIG International Migration 52/2 (2014), pp. 122–139; Lever/Milbourne, Migrant.

rity connected to obtaining regular payment as a wage-earner; and he knows he has to be smart enough to run a business in a way that consistently safeguards new costumers and continual commissions. Thus, parents' values and norms regarding ways to cope with labour market challenges and other everyday practices do not go unacknowledged by their children. In Sergei's case, it is obvious that experiences during his childhood and youth are important for his conceptual world in the radical new circumstances he faces in Denmark.

Following the same line of argument, it is also intriguing that Ilya has not had experiences similar to Sergei. For a number of years, his father has worked in a subordinate inspector position in a state-run gas company in Ukraine, a position he has kept during the transition. In Ukraine, Ilya himself took training as security guard, also at that time favouring waged work with steady working hours and undertakings. Self-employment, however, he is acquainted with through his mother, who complemented the family economy with sewing work; accordingly, Ilya associates self-employment with poverty and something done from necessity, rather than with independence and freedom.

As is apparent from the above discussion, in the case of Sergei and Ilya there are clear parallels between their lifemode characteristics and those of their parents (in this case their fathers). However, just like individuals are not mere products of their circumstances, practices and values passed on from parents are not simply mirrored in their children; they might even be rejected by the rising generation (leaving only a complete lack of relation between the idea of the good life of children and their parents unlikely). As individuals, we are rarely entirely clear about where the journey from youth to adulthood leads us; but along the way we employ all our working capabilities and social competences (among these also the ones passed on from parents) as we encounter challenges and opportunities. During that unpredictable process we learn more about our preferences and desires; what suits us, and what makes us withdraw and try out other opportunities?

The example of the two Ukrainian families cannot be directly applied to all Ukrainians, nor in general to migrants in agriculture with probable access to a permanent residency permit. The principal insight is that their course of life cannot be reduced to either the circumstances that they face or the background that they come from; although both impact them. To have a more complete understanding, it is necessary to inquire into the ways in which they comprehend their life circumstances and background.

Concluding remarks

Fundamentally, migrants do not differ from other people. But they are likely to encounter much more unpredictability than non-migrants. The point therefore is that not only the special circumstances connected to migrants' conditions (here with a main focus on the labour market) must be inquired, but also the distinct cultural preferences (here understood in lifemode terms) that the migrants' hold in their encounter with these circumstances. The differences mean that in analyses of particular migratory processes it is important to acknowledge that migrants, if they establish livelihoods in new countries, will use the circumstances that they encounter in dissimilar ways. Accordingly, regarding the families inquired here, it is likely that in ten years we will find the migrants in very distinct courses of life, despite the fact that they now seem to be on the same course of integration (though at different stages) and have shared similar living and working conditions.